

VZCZCXRO8715
OO RUEHDA
DE RUEHAK #1302/01 1491308
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 291308Z MAY 07
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2300
RUEKJCS/CJCS WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC//PA
RUEUITH/ODC ANKARA TU
INFO RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS 8098
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 2772
RUEHDA/AMCONSUL ADANA 1986
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS 5932
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 5710
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2322
RUEUITH/DET 1 39LG ANKARA TU
RHMFIUU/USDOCO 6ATAF IZMIR TU
RHMFIUU/39OS INCIRLIK AB TU
RHMFIUU/AFOSI DET 523 IZMIR TU
RHMFIUU/39ABG INCIRLIK AB TU
RHMFIUU/AFOSI DET 522 INCIRLIK AB TU
RUEUITH/AFLO ANKARA TU

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 001302

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL
JCS PASS J-5/CDR S. WRIGHT

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

TUESDAY, MAY 29, 2007

In Today's Papers

US Jetfighters Violate Turkish Airspace

All papers report over the weekend and today the Turkish General Staff (TGS) said in a statement posted on its website late Sunday that two US F-16 jetfighters had violated Turkish airspace on May 24 for four minutes in the province of Hakkari on the border with Iraq.

The violation is seen by several papers and commentators as a "challenge," demonstrating that US forces were closely monitoring Turkish troop movements along the Iraqi border. Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul said such things sometimes happen in border areas, adding said the Turkish Foreign Ministry (MFA) was still awaiting details from the TGS. He noted that Ankara would decide on what to do after receiving a technical report from the military indicating whether the violation was intentional and the duration of the incursion. MFA sources are quoted as saying summoning the US Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry or even a diplomatic note of protest were under consideration, depending on the technical report that the General Staff sends. Papers report US Ankara Embassy said the crossing of the US jetfighters into Turkish airspace was inadvertent, and that the incident was under investigation.

Editorial Commentary on US Violation of Turkish Airspace

Sami Kohen observes in the mainstream daily Milliyet: "It is even beyond imagining that two allies, the US and Turkey, would engage in a hot conflict over Northern Iraq. This kind of development can only bring very serious consequences for both sides. Let's hope that this will never ever happen. However a concrete effort is also needed to ensure that we do not come closer to that point. The effort should be pursued at the highest possible level and Turkey does not have the luxury of ignoring this fact in the midst of the election excitement. The US and other coalition partners are responsible for emphasizing the need for strong cooperation with Turkey to the Kurdish administration and to the central authority in Baghdad to counter terrorism. While the US suggests Turkey not act unilaterally in northern Iraq against the terrorist shelters, is the

US doing anything to act together with Iraqis on this issue? The lack of concrete action is the main reason for the current circumstances. A constructive and urgent dialogue - that's what we need at this point."

Okay Gonensin writes in the mainstream daily Vatan: "Given the current situation in Turkey, everybody seems ready for the possibility of a cross-border operation in Northern Iraq. The American administration, which keep Iraq under occupation and considers the Kurds its most important allies in Iraq, clearly and repeatedly expressed its opposition to a cross-border incursion. The recent violation by two American F-16 jets can also be interpreted as a message to Turkey. It is debatable whether a cross-border operation can really be a serious blow to the PKK. An operation in northern Iraq means an armed conflict with both Kurds and American forces there. When and if Turkish forces cross the border, it will only bring serious economic and political consequences. Regardless of the excuses, the consequences of war are borne by people. Turkey should never consider 'settling the issue with war' as an option."

Iraq Urges Turkey to Use Diplomatic Means to Stop PKK
Hurriyet, Milliyet, Sabah, Radikal, Cumhuriyet, Zaman and others report Monday and today that Iraqi deputy Prime Minister Barham Salih told reporters after meeting with a Turkish delegation in Baghdad that Iraq would not accept a breach of its sovereignty. Iraq urged Turkey over the weekend to pursue diplomatic means as it attempts to stop the PKK terrorists operating out of northern Iraq. Turkey's special Iraq envoy Oguz Celikkol, the head of the delegation to Baghdad, said a number of issues had been discussed, including Ankara's growing uneasiness at recent violence it blames on the PKK.

ANKARA 00001302 002 OF 002

Parliament Overrides Sezer's Constitutional Reforms Veto
All papers report that on Monday the Turkish Parliament approved constitutional reforms including the election of the president by direct popular vote, overriding the veto of President Sezer. The bill also envisages holding parliamentary elections every four years instead of five, requires a quorum of at least one third of total number of MPs for convening parliamentary sessions, and reducing the presidential term to a renewable five years. Sezer cannot veto the legislation a second time if it is unchanged. He must either approve the law or call for a referendum.

US Congressional Delegation in Turkey
All papers report that US Congressional delegation led by Edward Whitfield, the co-chairman of Congressional Caucus on Turkish-US relations, and a Senate Delegation headed by Senator E. Benjamin Nelson held meetings at the Turkish General Staff and also met with Prime Minister Erdogan and Foreign Minister Gul. Responding to the questions after meeting the PM, Whitfield said "The US is telling Turkey not to intervene in Iraq. But on the other hand the Turkish public and soldiers are losing their lives. The US needs to take concrete steps but we are not urging military action." Mainstream Sabah reports the visit with the headline "Support from US Senators."

Lagendijk will Visit East & Southeast of Turkey Prior to the Elections
Leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet reports that prior to the July 22 elections, European Parliament's Turkey-EU Joint Parliamentary Commission Co-Chairman Joost Lagendijk will have meetings with the local people in Van, Hakkari and Mardin to observe developments connected to the election.

TV Highlights
NTV

Domestic News

- Turkish security forces detained two members of the outlawed PKK in the Aegean port city of Izmir, seizing hand grenades, explosives, two assault rifles and two handguns.

- A retired policewoman has been taken into custody for giving a fake passport to Guven Akkus, the suspected PKK militant who killed himself and six other people in a suicide bomb attack in Ankara last week.

- On Monday President Sezer approved a law envisaging the foundation of new universities in 17 cities: Karaman, Agri, Sinop, Siirt, Nevsehir, Karabuk, Kilis, Cankiri, Artvin, Bilecik, Bitlis, Kirklareli, Osmaniye, Bingol, Mus, Mardin and Batman.

- An investigation has been launched against a retired cleric (Mufti) in Bartin who allegedly encouraged school children to boycott national holidays.

International News

- US Ambassador to Iraq Ryan Crocker said Monday his talks with Iranian counterpart Hassan Kazemi Qomi were positive.

- A car bomb killed at least 24 people and wounded 70 in central Baghdad on Monday.

- Thirteen people were killed and 35 wounded in Afghanistan when police fired at a crowd protesting against a provincial governor.

WILSON